



Climate change: The health consequences of inactivity

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Abstract:

Quite what tips a population from apathy to frenzied action is often mysterious. Why does drink-driving engender fraternity one minute, and revulsion the next, while a quarter of UK citizens still smoke tobacco, despite 40 years of solid evidence? In general, changing behaviours which are immediately pleasurable, but which are associated with some indeterminate personal risk at some unspecified time, are very hard to shift: unprotected sex, indulgence in excess alcohol, use of tobacco, or overconsumption of high-calorie foods are all classic examples. To change such personal behaviours requires a number of factors: the use of a trusted vector (the advice of a doctor, being trusted, increases abstinence from smoking), a solid and clearly communicated evidence base, persistent and consistent communication (which is why one-off campaigns fail), emotional engagement ('this matters to you and those you love'), empowerment to act, a roadmap to do so, and support in taking such action. Big tilts in population behaviours, however, happen much more rapidly, when a given way of behaving becomes 'accepted as the standard'. Climate change threatens not only our health as individuals, but also our very survival. and it does so imminently. In recent years, the alarm has been raised by a vast array of diverse medical bodies, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, The American College of Preventative Medicine, the American Medical Association, The American Public Health Association, the Australian Medical Association, the World Federation of Public Health Associations, and the World Health Organization itself.

Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19859086>

Resource Description

Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location: ☒

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Mitigation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified